

Connecticut Library Association Board Meeting  
November 16, 2023  
10:00 am Business Meeting via Zoom  
**Minutes**

1. **Call to Order:** President Sarah McCusker called the meeting to order at 10:02 am.  
**Approval of Minutes:** October meeting minutes  
A motion to approve the October meeting minutes was made by Mary Etter and seconded by Olivia Scully Motion approved. No oppositions. One Abstention.
2. **Old Business**
  - a. **President's Report** – See attached.
  - b. **Treasurer's Report** – See attached.
3. **New Business**
  - a. CLA Supporter/donor/contributor award from Fundraising Committee- see attached.

Representative Reports:

**CT State Library: Deborah Schander:** See attached.

**NELA: Scott Brill:** Absent.

**ALA: Kate Byroade:** The big news that just dropped from ALA is that they have appointed former ALA president Leslie Burger as interim Executive Director of the American Library Association.

**ALA EDI Assembly: Kristina Lareau:** See attached.

**ACLB: Denise Stankovics:** Absent.

**ACLPD: Alyssa Dansinghani:** Absent.

**America 250: Doug Lord:** No report.

**BCALA: Robert Kinney:** Absent.

**Commission on Ed Tech: Colleen Bailie:** Absent.

**Communications Task Force: Doug Lord:** The discord server we have been working on is in test mode.

**CASL: Mary Ellen Minichiello & David Bilmes:** It's been a busy fall for CAS-L. Kate attended the November Board meeting for CASL and spoke about what the legislative committee is working on and how our two groups can continue to collaborate. We had the American Association of School Librarians Annual Conference in Tampa last month. There was a lot of controversy about this because a lot of school librarians thought we shouldn't be having a national conference in Florida with everything going on with the book bans but the ASL thought that it was important to show our support for librarians in Florida who needed it more than ever while they are going through these terrible times down there while being a school librarian and a public librarian. We had about 20 CASL members attend the conference and there was a lot of learning and fun, but the focus was on book challenges and how to work together to stop them, which sadly continues to be the top priority for school librarians right now. In other news, Nerd Camp Connecticut is back March 2<sup>nd</sup>, in Cedric Middle School in West Hartford and is open to anyone-not just CASL members. We've had PD events about AI in school libraries, all things pre-k and fig jam. There will be a PD on Canva and Pear deck and information on the CASL website. You don't have to be a member to attend any PD that we are offering. We do not have any CASL conferences this year, we've decided to have it Biannual for right now, so we are not

conflicting with ASL which is also in the fall. Our next conference will be October 21<sup>st</sup>, 2024. We are close to securing a venue.

**CLC: Ellen Paul:** We had a really wonderful and busy November. We hosted our School Librarian and Professional Development Day on election day. We had Deborah Caldwell Stone from the Office of Intellectual Freedom covering all things book challenges. We had our vendor expo earlier this week which was wonderful with 20 vendors and well over 100 librarians coming through. Amanda deserves a big thank you for organizing those events. As we look towards December, we are going to focus on getting our new sets of contracts for a January 1<sup>st</sup> start. We went out to bid for digital resources and received about 20 bids and rewarded 15 of those companies and are working towards contracts. Hopefully in the new year we are going to be giving you a lot more purchasing options and it's our goal to create a comprehensive market for all your purchasing needs.

**FOCL: Debbie Misiaszek:** We were unable to get a mini session going in November and at this point we are moving towards February, and I should have an update in the next month.

**Library Connection: Laura Horn:** No report.

**Region 1: Heather Aronson:** The Hotchkiss Library in Sharon reopened their restored and expanded building in August. Since then, we have been very busy with increased traffic, circulation, program attendance, and library card registration. The reception was wonderful. Also, Gunn Memorial in Washington had their open house this past Sunday after a year's long trial from severe flood damage.

**Region 2: Shana Shea:** Absent.

**Region 3: Chonte Fields:** Absent.

**Region 4: Erin Dummeyer:** The CT State Community College Norwalk campus is planning for their 2024 academic festival banned books and democracy freedom of expression in an academic setting. They're looking for a guest speaker. The date of their festival is April 3<sup>rd</sup> -4<sup>th</sup> 2024. Please contact Allison Wang if you have a speaker idea. Last month I spoke about Billy Bones at Stratford Library, and we have an update on him. Billy was an engaging marketing campaign to encourage library card renewals, share their love of reading and promote programs. Stratford used a wildlife camera to ask the public to share the books they are reading and created a Billy sized library card to hold (a 12ft skeleton from Home Depot). Billy shared his own favorite book Stephen King's Skeleton Crew which launched an online conversation about the author's time living in Stratford during his formative years. Their library knitting group coordinated making a giant winter hat for his 44" diameter head and their maker space team created an iron on decal of the Stratford library logo for his size 6X t-shirt. There was a lot of buzz around town and in total, their Billy Bones campaign on Facebook, Instagram and X featured 8 posts which had reached 24,231 people compared to their average reach of 750 to 1,000 people. Billy left them as he was on loan to the library but his tenure though brief was memorable.

**Region 5: Emily Rush:** Absent.

**Region 6: Madhu Gupta:** Absent- sent report: East Lyme Public Library- Associate Director Tara Borden is leaving to accept a Director position in New York; her last day will be December 4th. An opening for a new Assistant/Associate Director will be posted soon. Public Library of New London- The Library has a new family workstation and a soundproof phone booth.

**SCSU: Cindy Schofield:** In addition to the new ALA executive director, she is a Southern Grad from our Undergrad program. Many thanks to all of the libraries who are wrapping up our fall interns and our spring interns are being placed. We will be having a celebration of student research in December for people who are finishing their special projects.

(Chat) Cindy Schofield: First SCSU ILS Research Forum is December 14. (Time to be announced. Check the ILS FB page for details.

**Sustainability Taskforce: Doug Lord: (Alessandra)** We are moving along, and all of our subcommittees have been meeting and we will be bringing some things to the board at the next

meeting to get some feedback and let them know where things are. Everything is running smoothly right now.

Doug- The process is moving along and is nearing the end of Stage 1- where have we been and getting on track on where we want to go and what things we want to forward to the board. I would defer to Alessandra for more information as needed.

Association Committee Reports:

**ADA: Maria Bernier:** I'd like to give Kristina a boost for everything she said is fabulous for accessibility and ADA wonderful things to bring our libraries as well as this particular organization. I would love it if these particular meetings had closed captioning turned on. I'm not finding the functionality in this particular zoom instance, so our zoom host needs to enable it in their account, so we have access to it and its available. Also, because I'm a former DLD nerd, I did put into the chat a link to other accessibility related webinars and workshops that DLD had done in the past that are perennially helpful for everybody in terms of universal design and accessibility beyond just your buildings and programs and staffing management. Accessibility is everywhere and is more than just the basic accommodations. It really is what is going to be best for everybody and what makes life better for everybody.

**Archivist: Gerald Seagrave:** Leslie Burger is a past CLA president and worked at the State Library. No archives report.

**Awards: Region Reps:** N/A

**Career Development: Andy Forsyth & Amanda Stern:** (Andy) Leslie Burger was one of the presenters at this years Library Leadership Institute in August. (Amanda): We had a meeting and really decided we want to put more oomph into our mentorship. We are going to be having a mentorship drive and really looking for extra people to serve as mentors. We've had some fabulous mentors in our program and want to make sure we have not burned those folks out by continuing to ask them to take new folks on twice a year. If you have not participated and are interested in participating, we would love it. If you could think of folks on staff, you do not have to be a director or a long-time librarian in order to serve. We are just looking for people who have some library expertise who can pass it along to someone who is not so far along as they are. Our compensation benchmark study is underway. KardasLarson has all of the materials and is working on that for us. We are also working on programs for the annual meeting. Mentors do have to be CLA members.

**Conference 2024: Alessandra Casiello:** Conference is going very well. Yesterday we were able to do a tour for those on the committee who haven't seen the back end of it. We have about 20 proposals right now and we are hoping that each section and committee puts together 5 ideas/ 4 sessions for your specific section/committee. We want to make sure we have a robust conference that really hits every aspect of librarianship and that the members of your sections/ committees actually have something that they want to come for. The deadline right now is December 1<sup>st</sup>. For Exhibits and sponsors, we are doing really well. We have 3 sponsors so far; we've taken about \$8,500 from sponsors and \$11,000 from sponsors and exhibitors together, which is great for less than a month of that being out. If you are a company that wants to be an exhibitor or one of our liaison's here, please make sure you sign up. We will be trying to make sure that people get confirmation of proposals in early January so we can open registration before February 1<sup>st</sup> with a preliminary schedule. At least what is going on what day. Please get proposals in by the deadline so we don't have to extend the deadline. The committee is doing great work- they are doing great work and working really hard.

(Chat): Also for conference- if you are a section or committee and want to do a meetup at conference, that does need a proposal as well so we can allot you time and space!

**Grants/Fundraising: Alessandra Casiello:** We have our fall fundraiser running right now through Meadow farms as Boone Supply is redoing their fundraising division. The shopping link is in the chat. You'll be able to use this link through December 31<sup>st</sup>. They have very similar things to Boone Supply- lots of great presents for holiday supply, they have wrapping paper so take a look if you are getting anything for the holidays. Our next fundraiser is our Giving Tuesday Fundraiser which we started last year. We have secured one sponsor who is going to match up to \$1,000. I am hoping we can get one more sponsor and have emails out to companies that we work with so hopefully that will happen. It will be November 28<sup>th</sup> and will be a 3-day campaign Monday through Wednesday with their information trying to get people to make those donations so that we can get that full \$1,000 match. So, if you are going to donate to us this season, try and save it for those 3 days so we can include it in the match.

<https://shop.meadowfarms.com/connecticut-library-association-101588>

**Intellectual Freedom: Sam Lee & Lindsay Delligan:** Huge thank you to Ellen and all the staff at CLC for putting on the Intellectual Freedom conference. We were very kindly invited to attend, and it was awesome. We got to hear from the superintendent from Guilford Public Schools, Deborah Caldwell Stone from ALA and there were amazing speakers. We are hard at work on coming up with proposals for the CLA conference and working on some Fall/winter workshop ideas.

**Legislative: Kate Byroade & Olivia Scully:** I'll just start by saying we have a bunch of legislative events coming up. Link will be in the chat for the CLA events page. We have a few each week for the next couple of weeks all throughout the state. Keep an eye out for a legislative event coming to a town near you. Please join us for one of these if you can. It's a great chance to meet local legislators and really advocate on behalf of CT Libraries. I think this is the full list but if there are any others they will be showing up on that page.

(Chat) Fall Legislative Events Details at <https://ctlibraryassociation.org/meetinginfo.php>. 11/22, 6 PM – Ashford; 11/27, 6 PM – Avon; 11/29, 8:30 AM – Thompson; 11/30, 8:30 AM – Darien; 12/6, 6 PM – Danbury; 12/11, 6 PM – Groton; 12/14, 6 PM – Winsted.

Kate- I attended the CT Lobbying Conference on October 26<sup>th</sup>. We had several members registered to go and 4 that were able to attend that day- mostly new attendees and they all thought it was very valuable and enlightening. Think about it for next year. An exciting opportunity has come our way. Representative Christine Palm, who represents Essex and Deep River area, reached out to us and said we want to have librarians speak about the challenges we are facing. Top of mind is Intellectual Freedom challenges we've been experiencing in ever greater numbers in the last two years. We have also been invited to just speak about our concerns and issues. We are working on putting together people to tell their specific stories. We also welcome having people in the audience. This will probably be recorded on CTN so it will be something you can watch live or later on YouTube. It will be December 5<sup>th</sup> from 3-5 PM at L of B. Ellen if you have anything to add: (Ellen): No but I will just say this is really an extraordinary opportunity placed in front of us. An opportunity that is greater than any we have seen in the recent past. We have a legislature who is inviting librarians up to the state capitol to talk about concerns with the intent to introduce protective legislation in the next session. This isn't us begging the legislature to pay attention to us. This is an open invitation to come and talk to them for 2 hours and they are going to hear our concerns and take action on them. So, to just underscore the importance, it's an incredible opportunity that we have here.

Kate: We are working with CASL to have school librarians because they have had the brunt of a lot of very public issues in recent years, so we are working closely with them to have school librarians. If you can come watch or participate or have a story to share, reach out to me or Ellen because we are pulling this together.

(Chat) Ellen Paul: Legislative Listening Session: December 5th 3 to 5pm at the Legislative Office Building in Hartford, more info coming.

**Outreach: John Casiello:** If your section or committee would like to have a meetup at conference, submit that as a proposal. Also, as you are thinking of your proposals and things, I'd love to find ways to promote our sections and the work they are doing and how our members can be involved at the conference. I think if we can come up with something even passive, it doesn't necessarily have to be you talking or at a table at any given time. Last year (thank you to Olivia) we had a "I'd like to be involved" putting your name in a box. Start putting your thinking hats on of how your section or committee can be represented at conference aside from just sessions you are proposing. How we can get you all front and center so we can get more engagement and involvement and increase the number of members joining these sections. We do have space right outside of the exhibit hall where we can do posters or signs. We can take advantage of this opportunity when we have about 400+ members a day.

**PEG: Mary Etter:** Welcome to Heather who has hopefully come across the information that she is on the PEG committee as a regional rep. Ill be in touch with all of them since we still have to take on the project of updating information and making sure we have PEG well described on the website. I made contact with Ms. Thomas who received our PEG grant right before the conference in which she was attending and am looking forward to hearing what she has to say having gone to it.

**Procedures: Lisa Karim:** No report.

Section Reports:

**Children's: Sage Gentry & Alexandra Remy:** No report.

**CLASS: VACANT**

**College & University: Rob Walsh:** Absent.

**JEDI: Mary Richardson & Sam Connell:** We had our fall meeting membership and talked about what we are looking at, what we are doing, and our opinions, thoughts, and feelings. We are looking to do a February short workshop. We are also talking about conference proposals which are forthcoming.

**Public Libraries: Jennifer Sullivan:** No report.

**Reference & Adult Services: Christie Mitchell:** No report.

**Resource Sharing: Matt Earls:** We met in Westport with Bill Harmer- Lindsay Delligan, Scott Brill and I and Westport has an incredible video studio. Bills idea is that we would like to broadcast into the library. We will need to have 6 to 8 beta testers so if you'd like your library to be a beta tester, get in touch with me and I will see if we can hook you up with that.

**Support Staff: VACANT**

**Technical Services: VACANT**

**YA: Stephanie Smith:** We are working on having a small and quick gathering to do bylaws. We are working on having a smaller workshop in February, but the big thing is getting conference proposals in. If anybody is interested in being co-chair let me know so I don't have to do it alone.

**Adjournment: 10:51 AM**

**Present:** Sarah McCusker, Scott Jarzombek, Margaret Khan, Shannon Angelone, Kate Byroade, Kristina Lareau, Heather Aronson, Erin Dummeyer, Alexandra Remy, Mary Richardson, Jennifer Sullivan, Christie Mitchell, Matt Earls, Stephanie Smith, Maria Bernier, Jerry Seagrave, Amanda Stern, Andy Forsyth, Alessandra Casiello, Lindsay Delligan, Olivia Scully, John Casiello, Doug Lord, Lisa Karim, Robert Scheier, Colleen Bailie, David Bilmes, Ellen Paul, Amanda Stern, Lisa Comstock, Deborah Schander, Debbie Misiaszek, Laura Horn, Cindy Schofield,

## Announcements

### President's Report- Sarah McCusker

I want to note that the CT Lobbying conference happened a couple of weeks ago. I was unable to attend but I know we have about 5 or 6 people from CLA who attended so thank you to everyone who went. We have gotten some anecdotal feedback from people about the implementation of senate bill 2 which became Public Act 23101. There was a lot of confusion and concern about the roll out of it after it was passed. Kate Byroade and I put out a small survey asking for people's experience and then had a very productive meeting with Deborah regarding it. I think we have resolved a majority of the issues with that, and it was really good to have such a nice conversation with Deborah. My last thing is a crowd sourcing thing from an email that came into the presidents email this morning from a reporter from NPR. They are looking for libraries that have tool lending libraries. I know that Mansfield has one but if you know of others, please drop them in the chat so that I can share them with him.

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### Treasurer's Report- Margaret Khan

I have a short report again this month. We've received \$1,700 in donations this year to date and \$12,000 in membership which is a 13% change compared to October 2022. Membership is holding steady, and I just talked to Bob about our taxes, and we are in good shape for taxes this year.

## New Business

CLA Supporter/donor/contributor award from Fundraising Committee- Alessandra Casiello

I would like to present an award at the CLA Annual conference moving forward. Since I've been doing this for the past 4 years, we have people and companies who continuously give to us monetarily, attend our fundraisers, or provide us with some type of support or contribution to do our fundraisers. I would like to start recognizing those people that are our ongoing supporters. I'm not sure what I'd like to call this award, but I would like it to be part of our award ceremony and therefore it would come out of our awards budget that we have to get that company/person a plaque. I'm not sure if it has to be voted on but I wanted to bring it to the board to see thoughts and make people aware of it.

### Comments-

Mary Etter: In the past we've had special recognition awards.

Alessandra: We do have them and because we have awards specifically from other committees and this is a committee and its specific to what they are doing for this portion of CLA, I would like it to be something separate.

Mary Etter: I think it's a great idea.

Lisa Karim: It's never a bad idea to have the executive board brought on to make it formal.

Sarah McCusker: Just to cover our bases. I think it's a great idea. Thanks to your work we have so many supporters who really do a lot for us and it would be good to recognize them.

Alessandra: I'm not sure how it would work yet, and I'll talk to the awards committee about it, but I don't know if this is one where we will do outside nominations. I think it's more what the fundraising committee and the board have seen as people who contribute rather than anyone who can nominate someone for this. That's all I have but I guess a motion if needed.

Sarah- Would someone like to move that we establish a yet to be formerly named CLA supporter award to be presented at conference?

1. Scott Jarzombek
2. Lisa Karim

No oppositions or abstentions.

## State Librarians Report- Deborah Schander

Just a couple of things to update you on from the state library. On October 25<sup>th</sup>, the state library cohosted with CLC an open house for new directors. It was a really wonderful event for people to come and join us, learn about the programs and initiatives of CLC and the State Library, talk with people, meet hands on and talk about many of our initiatives. We thought it was very successful and are very appreciative to CLC for cosponsoring that program with us.

We've recently started the next round of Future School- what used to be called Future School TSFX cohorts- based on funding we've received from the Institute for Museum and Library Services. This cohort is focusing on organization and structuring library leadership. So, we are bringing in large groups of people to talk about their specific organizations but there is always the opportunity for individuals to join in. We had a number of people from Connecticut in this last cohort. For more information on joining those on DLD LibGuides page.

All Connecticut Reads titles for 2024 were recently announced. I'll drop the link for the website as well as the virtual launch which was on YouTube so for those of you who are participating in that program, it's always exciting to see those new titles coming.

Over Halloween, I was able to attend the State Librarian annual conference. It's a chance for all the State Librarians to meet together once a year and talk about our areas of mutual concern and interest. Every state library is very different and operates under different structures, but we do have a lot of areas of shared interests, so it was good to meet with my colleagues and have those conversations. Those are just a couple of the initiatives out of the state library for today.

All CT Reads list: <https://sites.google.com/view/allctreads/home>

YouTube premiere: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=icrJdsFd7e4>

ALA EDI Assembly- Kristina Lareau

We met last week and meet about once a quarter. At this meeting, we discussed a lot about ADA and beyond ADA and looking more at disability friendly libraries. ADA is the law but also taking a look at the need for universal design in everything we do. If the person who has the most trouble doing something, if we design or create the bridges and the accessibility for them to that, it benefits everybody. In the packet there are some links to the meeting recording and the two presentations and liaison updates from various organizations in states across the country. I'm going to drop some links in the chat which is just the link to ALA's Universal Designs for libraries and the Principles of Design being Equitable Use, Flexibility in Use, Simple and Intuitive Use, Perceptible Information, Tolerance for Error, Low Physical Effort, Size and Space for Approach and Use.

<https://www.ala.org/asgcla/resources/universaldesign>

Really that is the emphasis in using that lens for everything that we do: the programs, our collections, our physical space and really looking through the lens of that equity and flexibility to provide the best user experience for every single patron. So many libraries welcome everyone, which is technically true but if we are not specifically welcoming communities who have difficulty in any way, it's not as easy. A lot of discussion regarding staff as well; Could your library have a staff member who is in a wheelchair? Would that be difficult, are they able to get around your library? Are they able to perform regular librarian duties or would there be things that are off limits? The presentations are wonderful and the contact information for those presenters is also in there and are willing to chat and share.

The other points I want to pull out for everyone here, sometimes we might not think about on a daily basis if we are able-bodied and we don't have to and those who are neuro-divergent and other disabilities and looking at language and how people read and write. Use of email and how there are so many miscommunications and using email because you can't read irony or tone or body language in that so always having that idea of following up after a written email because for some people, they can't get their social cues and social feedback from written language. Especially those with certain neurodivergent, it's difficult to regulate their emotional responses. That and freely using pronouns and modelling that behavior. Some people don't mind using "people with disabilities" some people don't mind "disabled person," it's really a personal preference so talk to the people who it affects. And the last thing is eye contact. A lot of neurodivergent people have difficulty maintaining eye contact. It is a social norm and expectation especially in a professional environment that you're able to look someone in the eye and keep that eye contact to communicate your message but for some people it is physically painful, those people are often overlooked in the workplace for promotions and other opportunities for those who seem to be able to keep contact. There's a lot of great information in there.

Chat Message:

Maria Bernier (she/her) UConn Avery Point: Kristina had fabulous suggestions for universal design and improving accessibility for all. You can also find info on these topics in recordings from the GELS series on DLD's YouTube channel:

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OYRNIVOMIA0&list=PLRvTJbvPzFNeZ8WQZoUjRc5RQzJI DD\\_Oc](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OYRNIVOMIA0&list=PLRvTJbvPzFNeZ8WQZoUjRc5RQzJI DD_Oc)